METHOD FOR INDICATING LOCATION AND DIRECTION OF A GRAPHICAL USER INTERFACE ELEMENT

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present disclosure claims the benefit of Provisional Application No. 61/095,225, filed Sep. 8, 2008, which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety and to which priority is claimed.

FIELD

[0002] The present disclosure is generally related to indicating direction and location of graphical user interface elements.

DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

[0003] Advances in technology have resulted in smaller and more powerful computing devices. For example, there currently exist a variety of portable personal computing devices, including wireless computing devices, such as portable wireless telephones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and paging devices that are small, lightweight, and easily carried by users. More specifically, portable wireless telephones, such as cellular telephones and internet protocol (IP) telephones, can communicate voice and data packets over wireless networks. Further, many such portable wireless telephones include other types of devices that are incorporated therein. For example, a portable wireless telephone can also include a digital still camera, a digital video camera, a digital recorder, and an audio file player. Also, such wireless telephones can process executable instructions, including software applications, such as a web browser application, that can be used to access the Internet. As such, these portable wireless telephones can include significant computing capabilities.

[0004] Although such portable devices may support software applications, the usefulness of such portable devices is limited by a size of a display screen of the device. Generally, smaller display screens enable devices to have smaller form factors for easier portability and convenience. However, smaller display screens limit an amount of content that can be displayed to a user and may therefore reduce a richness of the user's interactions with the portable device.

SUMMARY

[0005] At a multi-panel electronic device, when user input is received at a first display surface indicating that a graphical user interface (GUI) element is to be moved toward a gap between the first display surface and a second display surface, a portion of the GUI element is displayed at the second display surface. Thus, a user of the multi-panel electronic device may be provided with a continuous visual cue regarding the moving GUI element, including when a portion of the GUI element would otherwise by "hidden" due to the gap. By showing direction, location, and the ability to cross gaps, errors may be reduced and usability of multi-panel electronic devices may be improved.

[0006] In a particular embodiment, a method is disclosed that includes receiving at a first display surface of an electronic device a user input to move a graphical user interface element displayed at the first display surface. The electronic device further includes a second display surface that is separated from the first display surface by a gap. The method also includes determining that at least a portion of the graphical user interface element is to be moved beyond an edge of the first display surface into the gap such that the at least a portion of the graphical user element will not be displayed at the first display surface. The method further includes displaying the at least a portion of the graphical user interface element at the second display surface based on a location and a direction of movement of the graphical user interface element at the first display surface.

[0007] In another particular embodiment, an electronic device is disclosed. The electronic device includes a first panel having a first display surface. The electronic device also includes a second panel having a second display surface that is separated from the first display surface by a gap. The electronic device further includes a processor configured to receive at the first display surface a user input to move a graphical user interface element displayed at the first display surface. The processor is also configured to determine that at least a portion of the graphical user interface element is to be moved beyond an edge of the first display surface into the gap such that the at least a portion of the graphical user interface element will not be displayed at the first display surface. The processor is further configured to display the at least a portion of the graphical user interface element at the second display surface based on a location and a direction of movement of the graphical user interface element at the first display surface.

[0008] One particular advantage provided by at least one of the disclosed embodiments is an intuitive operation of a multi-panel electronic device in which a user may be provided with a continuous visual cue regarding a moving GUI element that would otherwise be hidden due to gaps between display surfaces of the multi-panel electronic device.

[0009] Other aspects, advantages, and features of the present disclosure will become apparent after review of the entire application, including the following sections: Brief Description of the Drawings, Detailed Description, and the Claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. **1** is a diagram of a first illustrative embodiment of an electronic device;

[0011] FIG. **2** is a diagram of an illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a fully folded configuration;

[0012] FIG. **3** is a diagram of an illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a thumbing configuration;

[0013] FIG. **4** is a diagram of an illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a travel clock configuration;

[0014] FIG. **5** is a diagram of a first illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a fully extended configuration;

[0015] FIG. **6** is a diagram of a second illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a fully extended configuration;

[0016] FIG. **7** is a diagram of an illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **1** in a video conferencing configuration;

[0017] FIG. **8** is a block diagram of a second illustrative embodiment of an electronic device;

[0018] FIG. **9** is a diagram of a third illustrative embodiment of an electronic device;

[0019] FIG. **10** s a partial cross-sectional diagram of the electronic device of FIG. **9**;

[0020] FIG. **11** is a diagram of an illustrative embodiment of the electronic device of FIG. **9** in an angled configuration;